

FELLOW NEWS

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT THE COASTAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS

ISSUE EIGHT

NOAA Coastal Services Center
LINKING PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA) COASTAL SERVICES CENTER TO RELAY INFORMATION ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AND PROVIDE A FORUM FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE AMONG FELLOWS, MENTORS, SEA GRANT, AND THE CENTER.

FELLOW FLASHBACK: CHAD NELSEN 1996-1998

"My dream job!" That is how former fellow Chad Nelsen describes his current position with the Surfrider Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the world's beaches. Based in San Clemente, CA, Chad is now the foundation's environmental director.

Four years ago, Chad was part of the first class of Coastal Management Fellows. Nominated by North Carolina Sea Grant, he worked with the Oregon Coastal Management program. His project involved developing the Dynamic Estuary Management Information System (DEMIS). The goal of the project was to conserve and restore estuarine habitat, mitigate for adverse estuarine effects caused by development, employ the best available scientific information for making coastal resource management decisions, and improve communication among local, state, and federal agencies.

Chad developed a framework for DEMIS that includes, among other things, guidelines for data collection, storage, and use. In addition, Chad collected over 100 geographic information system (GIS) data layers for the watershed to provide up-to-date access to relevant scientific data and information. He produced a

CD-ROM that includes the GIS data layers, all of the relevant metadata, and general information on the project and Coos Bay.

Chad credits the fellowship for developing his project management skills, GIS skills, and especially his public speaking abilities. He also gained a greater understanding of relationships between governmental and non-profit entities. Chad believes that although the fellowship may provide better job opportunities

for individuals interested in pursuing careers in the public sector, the experience afforded him with the leadership abilities necessary for his current position.

Chad began his involvement with Surfrider as an intern for the foundation during graduate school. Upon completing the fellowship in 1998, Chad went back to Surfrider as an environmental program manager, and was recently promoted to environmental director.

In his capacity as one of the organization's program directors, Chad's primary responsibility is to steer environmental policy initiatives at Surfrider. He does this by assisting the 50 nationwide chapters with their policy planning, and by overseeing five of the foundation's environmental programs: Beachscape, Blue Water Task Force, Respect the Beach, State of the Beach Report, and the Environmental Issues Team (EIT).

Beachscape is a program that focuses primarily on GIS and communication issues. The Foundation's Blue Water Task Force monitors and reports water quality. Respect the Beach is Surfrider's environmental education program, which includes public awareness campaigns. The foundation also produces an annual comprehensive State of the Beach Report.



Chad (above left) was in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the signing of the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000. The B.E.A.C.H. bill establishes consistent nationwide standards for beach water quality monitoring, testing, and notification, and was written with assistance from the Surfrider Foundation National Legal Issues Team. With Chad is fellow Surfrider Ed Mazarella holding a surfboard signed by members of Congress who supported the bill.

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Chad is particularly enthusiastic about the development of EIT, which incorporates environmental science with the foundation's policy planning. The EIT is comprised of scientists from various backgrounds who volunteer their expertise to Surfrider projects. Currently EIS has nearly 200 science-specific volunteers, and is actively recruiting more.

Chad is working hard to promote the expansion of EIT because he believes increased participation from the science community in the nonprofit sector strengthens the ability of organizations to achieve their goals, especially for conservation-based nonprofits that rely heavily on scientific evidence to support their mission.

Chad is pleased with the knowledge he gained and skills he acquired during the fellowship, and believes it is a worthwhile experience for anyone who wants to become professionally involved with coastal management issues. As for Chad's future, he says he is happier than he ever thought he could be with his job. ♦

To learn more about DEMIS, visit www.lcd.state.or.us/coast/demis/core.htm. For more information about Surfrider's environmental programs, contact Chad at cnelsen@surfrider.org, or visit the Surfrider Foundation's Web site at www.surfrider.org. Additional information may also be found at www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows.html.



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FOCUS ON FELLOWS: TESSIE FLEENER

Having grown up on Vashon-Maury Island in Washington, and lived in the Puget Sound area for most of her life, it is not surprising that Tessie Fleener has always wanted to devote her professional life to various aspects of coastal conservation. But when she graduated from Washington State University in 1981, the country's economic and political climate limited her professional future in environmental science.

Refusing to be discouraged by the lack of job opportunities in her field, Tessie decided a wide range of experiences, including volunteering and temporary jobs, would eventually prove to be an asset to her career pursuits.

Upon completing her master's degree in natural and cultural resource management in 1998 from Central Washington University, Tessie was pleased to discover a greater professional market in her field.

Not knowing specifically how she would get involved with coastal management issues, she decided to follow the advice of one of her former professors from grad school who insisted she apply for the fellowship.

Tessie was successfully nominated by Washington Sea Grant, and placed in the South Carolina Office of Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) within the state's Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) in Charleston.

Tessie's fellowship project involves establishing a DHEC-OCRM on-line clearinghouse containing information about a variety of natural resource issues. The interface, which deals pri-



Above: Tessie Fleener stands in front of a poster illustrating the process of her project.

marily with sprawl-related issues, is designed to cater to the demand of local governments for planning assistance and to inform public servants about the importance of natural resources, as well as the legal guidelines and rules for their use.

Tessie began her project by conducting a needs assessment among local governments within the coastal zone. She received nearly an 80 percent response rate to survey questionnaires designed to determine technical capabilities and informational needs. Based on the survey, Tessie discovered that 19 percent of the respondents do not have Internet access and, surprisingly, one respondent does not have an office telephone.

Once the needs assessment was completed, Tessie began compiling Web sites and other sources of data to be included in the information clearinghouse. This component of her project has two primary functions: to serve as an information management system and as an information distribution mechanism.

Now that the initial phases of the project are finished, Tessie will spend the remaining year of her fellowship assisting in the

development of OCRM state education programs such as geographic information systems (GIS) training, conflict mediation training, metadata training, and wetland delineation courses. She will also help the department integrate the new information into DHEC-OCRM policy development and permit review processes.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the fellowship for Tessie has been getting to know the "locals," and she hopes to have continued contact with individuals she has met during the survey process of the project.

Tessie and her three children plan to go back to the Pacific Northwest once the fellowship is over, but she emphasizes that nothing is definite. She is also interested in international environmental policy and would enjoy the opportunity to gain some professional experience in that field.

Regardless of what the future holds, Tessie believes the experience gained from her fellowship will help her achieve her goals. ♦

For more information e-mail Tessie at Fleenetg@chastn86.dhec.state.sc

FOCUS ON THE CENTER: GEO TOOLS 2001



The Coastal GeoTools '01 conference will be held in Charleston, South Carolina, from January 8 to 11, 2001. The conference will highlight the integration of geospatial tools and methodologies with coastal resource management.

Building on the tremendous success of the first Coastal GeoTools conference held in April 1999, the Coastal Services Center plans to offer more technical presentations, discussion forums, and training sessions as suggested by our participants. The Center will also be providing much requested exhibitor space.

Tools profiled in this three-day conference include geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing, the Global Posi-

tioning System, the Internet, and other tools used by coastal scientists and managers. Presenters from a wide variety of government, academic, and industry organizations will travel from across the country to relate their successes and challenges in integrating spatial technologies and coastal resource management.

Jack Dangermond, President of Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), will be the keynote speaker. The plenary speakers for Wednesday's lunch will be John Hoffman, Chairman of Aerial Images, Inc., and Chris Friel of the Florida Marine Research Institute.

The goal of GeoTools '01 is to help participants obtain a better understanding of innovative uses of technology and gain greater confidence in their ability to make technology related decisions. ♦

For more information about GeoTools visit <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/GeoTools/> or contact GeoTools Coordinators Mark Jansen or Steve Meador at (843) 740-1200, or e-mail GeoTools@noaa.gov. For registration and exhibit information, contact Lynn Sellers at (843) 740-1284 or Lynn.Sellers@noaa.gov.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

UPCOMING DEADLINES FOR THE 2001 NOAA COASTAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP

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| ✓ Final project selection | November 13, 2000 |
| ✓ Fellowship selection announcement | November 17, 2000 |
| ✓ Candidate applications to Sea Grant Directors | January 31, 2001 |
| ✓ Nomination packages due from Sea Grant | February 28, 2001 |
| ✓ Finalist selection | March 19, 2001 |
| ✓ Matching workshop | April 2001 (TBD) |
| ✓ Fellowship begins | August 1, 2001 |

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, VISIT THE FELLOWSHIP WEB SITE:

www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows.html